47 ⁊ min gast geblissude on Gode minum Hælende.

48 Forþam þe he geseah his þinene ead-modnesse. soðlice heonun-forð me eadige secgað ealle cneornessa.

49 Forþam þe me mycele þing dyde se ðe mihtig is. ⁊ his nama is halig.

50 ⁊ his mild-heortnes of cneoresse on cneoresse hine ondrædendum:

51 He worhte mægne on his earme. he to-dælde þa ofer-modan on mode hyra heortan.

52 He awearp þa rican of setle. and þa ead-modan uparof.

53 Hingrigende he mid godum gefylde. ⁊ ofermode idele forlet.

54 He afeng Israhel his cniht. ⁊ gemunde his mild-heortnesse.

55 Swa he spræc to urum fæderum. Abrahame and his sæde on á weoruld.

56 Soðlice Maria wunude mid hyre swylce þry monðas. ⁊ gewende þa to hyre huse.

57 Ða wæs gefylled Elizabethe cenning-tid. and heo sunu cende.

58 ⁊ hyre nehchebuaras ⁊ hyre cuðan þæt gehyrdon. þæt Drihten his mild-heortnesse mid hyre mærsude ⁊ hig mid hyre blissodon.

59 Ða on þam ehteoðan dæge hig comon þæt cild ymbsniðan. and nemdon hine his fæder naman Zachariam:

60 Ða andswarode his modor. Ne se soðes. ac he bið Iohannes genemned:

61 Ða cwædon hi to hyre. Nis nan on þinre mægðe þyssum naman genemned:

62 Ða bicnodon hi to his fæder. hwæt he wolde hyne genemnedne beon:

63 Þa wrat he gebedenum wex-brede. Iohannes is his nama. ða wundrodon hig ealle:

64 Ða wearð sona his muð ⁊ his tunge ge-openod. ⁊ he spræc. Drihten bletsigende:

65 Ða wearð ege geworden ofer ealle hyra nehchebuaras. and ofer ealle Iudea munt-land wæron þas word gewidmærsode.

66 ⁊ ealle þa ðe hit gehyrdon. on hyra heortan settun ⁊ cwædon. Wenst ðu hwæt byð þes cnapa. witodlice Drihtnes hand wæs mid him:

67 And Zacharias his fæder wæs mid halegum Gaste gefylled. ⁊ he witegode and cwæð.

68 Gebletsud sy Drihten Israhela God. forþam þe he geneosude. ⁊ his folces alysednesse dyde.

69 And he us hæle horn arærde on Dauides huse his cnihtes.

70 Swa he spræc þurh his halegra witegena muð. þa ðe of worldes frym ðe spræcon.

71 ⁊ he alysde us of urum feondum. and of ealra þara handa þe us hatedon.

72 Mild-heortnesse to wyrcenne mid urum fæderum. ⁊ gemunan his halegan cyðnesse.

73 Hyne uy to syllenne þone að þe he urum fæder Abrahame swor.

74 Ðæt we butan ege. of ure feonda handa alysede. him þeowian

75 On halignesse beforan him eallum urum dagum:

76 And þu cnapa bist þæs hehstan witega genemned. þu gæst beforan Drihtnes ansyne. his wegas gearwian.

77 To syllene his folce hæle gewit on hyra synna forgyfnesse.

78 Ðurh innoðas ures Godes mild-heortnesse. on þam he us geneosude of eastdæle up-springende.

79 Onlyhtan þam þe on þystrum ⁊ on deaðes sceade sittað. ure fet to gereccenne on sibbe weg:

80 Soðlice se cnapa weox. ⁊ wæs on gaste gestrangod. ⁊ wæs on westenum oð þone dæg hys ætywednessum on Israhel:

43 And my spiryt hath gladid in God myn helthe.

44 For he hath behulden the mekenesse of his handmayden: for lo for this alle generatiouns schulen seye that I am blessid.

45 For he that is mighti hath don to me grete thingis, and his name is holy.

46 And his mersy is fro kyndrede into kyndredis to men that dreden him.

47 He made myght in his arm, he scateride proude men with the thoughte of his herte.

48 He sette doun myghty men fro seete and enhaunside meke men.

49 He hath fulfillid hungry men with goodis, and he has left riche men voide.

50 He havynge mynde of his mercy took up Israel his child,

51 As he hath spokun to oure fadris, to Abraham, and to his seed into worldis.

52 And Marye dwellide with hir as it were thre monethis and turned agen into his hous.

53 But the tyme of beringe child was fulfillid to Elizabeth, and sche bar a son.

54 And the neyghbouris and cosyns of hir herden that the Lord hadde magnyfied his mercy with hir, and thei thankiden him.

55 And it was doon in the eightithe day thei camen to circumside the child, and thei clepiden him Zacarye by the name of his fadir.

56 And his modir answeride and seide, nay; but he schal be clepid Jon.

57 And thei seiden to hir, for no man is in thi kynrede that is clepid this name.

58 And thei bikenyden to his fadir, what he wolde that he were clepid.

59 And he axinge a poyntel wroot seiynge, Jon is his name, and alle men wondriden.

60 And annoon his mouth was openyd and his tunge, and he spak and blesside God.

61 And drede was maad on all hir neighbouris, and all the wordis weren puplischid on alle the mounteynes of Judee.

62 And alle men that herden puttiden in her herte, and seiden what manner child scal this be, for the hond of the Lord was with him.

63 And Zacarye his fadir was fulfillid with the holy Gost, and profeciede and seide.

64 Blessid be the Lord God of Israel, for he has visitid and maad redempcioun of his puple.

65 And he has rered to us an horn of helthe in the hous of Dauith his child.

66 As he spak by the mouth of hise holy prophetis that weren fro the world.

67 Helth fro oure enemyes, and fro the hond of alle men that hatiden us.

68 To do mersy with oure fadris, and to have mynde of his holy testament.

69 The grete ooth that he swoor to Abraham our fadir,

70 To geve himself to us, that we without drede delyvered fro the hond of oure enemyes serve him,

71 In holynesse and rightwisnesse before him, in alle our dayes.

72 And thou child schalt be clepid the profete of the higheste, for thou schalt go before the face of the Lord to make redy hise weyes.

73 To geve science of heelth to his puple into remissioun of her synnes.

74 By the inwardenes of the mersy of oure God, in the which he springyng up fro on high hath visited us.

75 To geve light to them that sitten in derknessis, and in schadowe of deeth, to dresse oure feet into the weye of pees;

76 And the child wexide, and was confortid in spiryt, and was in desert placis till to the day of his schewing to Ysrael.

Of the *Saxon* poetry some specimen is necessary, though our ignorance of the laws of their metre and the quantities of their syllables, which it would be very difficult, perhaps impossible, to recover, excludes us from that pleasure which the old bards undoubtedly gave to their contemporaries.

The first poetry of the *Saxons* was without rhyme, and consequently must have depended upon the quantity of their syllables; but they began in time to imitate their neighbours, and close their verses with correspondent sounds.

The two passages, which I have selected, contain apparently the rudiments of our present lyrick measures, and the writers may be justly considered as the genuine ancestors of the *English* poets.

He mai him sore adreden,
Ðæt he ðanne ore bidde ne mugen,
Uor þæt bilimpeð ilome.
He is wis þæt bit and bote
And bet biuoren dome.
Deað com on ðis midelard
Ðurh ðæs deofles onde,
And senne and sorge and iswinc,
On se and on londe.

Ic am elder ðanne ic wes,
A wintre ⁊ ec a lore.
Ic ealdi more ðanne ic dede,
Mi wit oghte to bi more.
Se þæt hine selue uorget,
Uor wiue oþer uor childe.
He sal comen on euele stede,
Bute god him bi milde.
Ne hopie wif to hire were,
Ne were to his wiue.
Bi for him selue eurich man,
Ðær wile he bieð aliue.
Eurich man mid þæt he haueð,
Mai beggen heueriche.
Se ðe lesse ⁊ se ðe more,
Here aider iliche.
Heuene and erðe he ouersieð,
His eghen bið fulbriht.
Sunne ⁊ mone ⁊ alle sterren,
Bieð ðiestre on his lihte.
He wot hwet ðencheð and hwet doþ,
Alle quike wihte.
Nis no louerd swich is xist,
Ne no king swich is drihte.
Heuene ⁊ erðe ⁊ all ðat is,
Biloken is on his honde.
He deð al þæt his wille is,
On sea and ec on londe.
He is ord albuten orde,
And ende albuten ende.
He one is eure on eche stede,
Wende wer ðu wende.
He is buuen us and bineðen,
Biuoren and ec bihind.
Se man þæt godes wille deð,
Hie mai hine aihwar uinde.
Eche rune he iherð,
And wot eche dede.
He ðurh-sihð eches iðanc,
Wai hwat sel us to rede.
Se man neure nele don god,
Ne neure god lif leden.
Er deð ⁊ dom come to his dure,
He mai him sore adreden.
Hunger ⁊ ðurst hete ⁊ chele,
Ecðe and all unhelðe.
Ðurh deð com on ðis midelard,
And oðer unselðe.
Ne mai non herte hit iwenche,
Ne no tunge telle.
Hu muchele winum and hu uele,
Bieð inne helle.
Loue God mid ure hierte.
And mid all ure mihte.
And ure emcristene swo us self,
Swo us lereð drihte.

Sume ðer habbeð lesse mergðe,
And sume ðer habbeð more.
Ech efter ðan þæt he dede,
Efter þæt he swanc sore.
Ne sel ðer bi bred ne win,
Ne oþer kennes este.
God one sel bi eches lif,
And blisce and eche reste.
Ne sal ðar bi scete ne scrud,
Ne worldes wele none.
Ac si mergþe þæt men us bihat,
All sall ben god one.
Ne mai no mergþe bi swo muchel,
Swo is godes isihðe.
Hi is soþ sune and briht,
And dai bute nihte.
Her is wele bute wane,
And reste buten iswinche.
Se þæt mai and nele ðeder come,
Sore hit sel uorðenche.
Her is blisce buten trege,
And lif buten deaðe.
Het eure sullen wunie ðer,
Bliðe hi bieþ and eaðe.
Her is geugeþe buten elde,
And elde buten unhelþe.
Nis ðer sorge ne sor non,
Ne non unselðe.
Her me sel drihten isen,
Swo ase he is mid iwisse.
He one mai and sel al bien,
Engles and mannes blisce.
To ðare blisce us bring god,
Het wixeð buten ende.
Ðanne he ure saula unbint,
Of lichamlice bend.
Crist geue us lede swich lif,
And habbe swichne ende.
Het we moten ðider cumen,
Ðanne we hennes wende.

About the year 1150, the *Saxon* began to take a form in which the beginning of the present *English* may be plainly discovered; this change seems not to have been the effect of the *Norman* conquest, for very few *French* words are found to have been introduced in the first hundred years after it; the language must therefore have been altered by causes like those which, notwithstanding the care of writers and societies instituted to obviate them, are even now daily making innovations in every living language. I have exhibited a specimen of the language of this age from the year 1135 to 1140 of the *Saxon* chronicle, of which the latter part was apparently written near the time to which it relates.

Ðis gære for þe king Stephne ofer sæ to Normandi. ⁊ þer wes under-fangen. forði þæt hi wenden þæt he sculde ben alsuic alse þe eom wes. ⁊ for he hadde get his tresor. ac he to-deld it ⁊ scatered sotlice. Micel hadde Henri king gadered gold ⁊ syluer. and na god ne dide me for his saule þar of. Ða þe king Stephne to Engla-land com þa macod he his gadering æt Oxene-ford. ⁊ þar he nam þe biscop Roger of Seres beri. ⁊ Alexander biscop of Lincoln. ⁊ te Canceler Roger hire neues. ⁊ dide ælle in prisun. til hi iafen up here castles. Ða þe suikes undergæton þæt he milde man was ⁊ softe ⁊ god. ⁊ na justise ne dide. þa diden hi alle wunder. Hi hadden him manred maked and aðes suoren. ac hi nan treuðe ne heolden. alle he wæron for-sworen. ⁊ here treoðes for-loren. for æuric rice man his castles makede and agænes him heolden. and fylden þe land full of castles. Hi suencten suiðe þe wrecce men of þe land mid castel-weorces. þa þe castles waren maked. þa fylden hi mid deoules and yuele men. Ða namen hi þa men þe hi wenden þæt ani god hefden. baðe be nihtes and be dæies. carl-men ⁊ wimmen. and diden heom in prisun efter gold and syluer. ⁊ wined heom un-tellendlice wining. for ne wæren næure nan martyrs swa wined alse hi wæron. Me henged up bi þe fet and smoked heom mid ful smoke. me henged bi þe þumbes.